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An exploratory study of translanguaging practices in an online beginner-level foreign language classroom

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Abstract: Translanguaging, the movement between communicative modes and features of different languages, is becoming an established research tradition in content-focused second language learning contexts. Pedagogic translanguaging practices nevertheless remain under-applied and under-researched in foreign language instructional settings, whether face-to-face or online. Synchronous virtual foreign language classrooms represent particularly rich spaces in which to begin to explore such practices, due to their multimodal affordances on the one hand and their technical constraints on the other. This study examines the pedagogic translanguaging practices that occur in a corpus of beginner-level Spanish online group tutorial data. A macro-level analysis of the interactional patterns that occur within this context reveals that both teacher participants follow closely the pedagogic prescriptions provided by the course designers with regard to the activities they employ. The finding that these activities offer limited opportunities for students to move between communicative modes and languages may be attributed in part to the emphasis on spoken interaction in this particular setting. A complementary micro-level analysis nevertheless reveals a more autonomous and intuitive approach to the teachers' choice of language when mediating such activities. Instances of student code-switching are relatively few, however. The study concludes with a call to course designers and practitioners to experiment with integrating a wide range of pedagogic translanguaging opportunities into online foreign language classroom activities, with a view to enhancing teaching, learning and communication in such environments.

Keywords: translanguaging, code-switching, foreign language classrooms, synchronous online communication

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1 Introduction

This paper describes a preliminary exploration of pedagogic translanguaging – the fluid movement between modes of communication and features of different languages to enhance learning – in an online beginner-level adult foreign language classroom. Pedagogic translanguaging is becoming increasingly integrated into content-focused second language educational environments with large numbers of minority-language speakers, such as schools with a high proportion of Hispanic students in New York City (see García 2009a). Such communicative practices contrast with foreign language classrooms where the use of the L1 still tends to be discouraged.

This study examines pedagogic translanguaging in a synchronous online foreign language instructional setting, a context which has received scant attention in the literature so far, and which is of special interest due to the multi-modal affordances of the medium on the one hand and its technical limitations on the other. While the interplay between modes of communication has been widely covered in the literature on online teaching and learning (see e. g. Lamy 2012), the fluid use of two or more languages in connection with such multi-modality has not. The current study aims to bridge this gap in the field by making a first attempt at examining the latter more closely.

1.1 Translanguaging

The term translanguaging was coined three decades ago to refer to the intentional alternation of the language of input and that of output within student activities in bilingual English-Welsh classrooms (Williams 1996; Baker 2001). Since then, its pedagogic scope has expanded, in parallel with significant theorising in the field.

Key to such developments has been the extension of the concept to the spontaneous everyday communicative practices of bilingual (or plurilingual) people in general (see García 2009a; 2009b). In this wider sense, translanguaging refers to the fluid integration of different modes of communication (speaking, listening, reading, writing, gesturing, etc.) and features (lexical, syntactic, phonological, semantic, etc.) of two or more languages in order to transmit and make meaning. While it includes the familiar notion of code-switching (alternating between languages within and across utterances), it is more encompassing in its scope. Manifestations of this ‘universal’ form of translanguaging are being documented in a number of social arenas – among young people (Jørgensen 2008), on the internet (Williams 2009), and across ‘superdiverse’ urban communities in the UK (Blommaert and Rampton 2011), to name a few.

On a theoretical level, the concept of universal translanguaging challenges the common perception of bilingual individuals having two separate languages, with scholars such as Otheguy et al. (2015: 283) making the distinction between the conventional notion of ‘named languages’ (e. g. Russian or Arabic), each of which is considered to correspond to a discrete system, and the integrated repertoire of idiolectal features from which bilingual individuals draw.

Recognition of the benefits of drawing on the synergies within a person’s bilingual linguistic repertoire (see e. g. Cook 1995, 2007; Grosjean 1989) has, in turn, led to appreciation of the ways in which translanguaging can enhance the mental processes involved in learning in general. Imaginative forms of pedagogic translanguaging are thus increasingly being integrated into content-focused second language educational contexts worldwide. In such environments, pedagogic translanguaging is not only being viewed as a long-term measure rather than a short-term crutch (Lewis et al. 2012: 641), but the focus is gradually shifting from teacher-directed classroom practices to student-led ones (see e. g. Canagarajah 2012; Creese and Blackledge 2010; García and Leiva 2014; García and Sylvan 2011). In addition to enhancing language awareness and cognitive processing through cross-linguistic transfer (see e. g. Baker 2001; Cook 2007; Cummins 2001, 2007), pedagogic translanguaging has been posited as improving links between the school, home and community (e. g. Creese and Blackledge 2010), reducing inequalities within mixed language groups (e. g. Yip and García 2015), and increasing student engagement. In support of such initiatives is considerable evidence of the cognitive value of extended mother tongue use in the classroom (see e. g. García and Wei 2014; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, 2009; Yip and García 2015).

Yet outside these areas of experimentation and scholarship, negative attitudes towards the practice of translanguaging – whether universal or classroom-based – remain widespread. These have been attributed to a combination of factors, among these, ‘monoglossic ideologies that value only monolingualism’ (García 2009a: 308; see also Phillipson 1992; Canagarajah 1999), prejudice towards the communities and individuals who engage in translanguaging (very often minority-language speakers), and long-held concerns that that, particularly in educational settings, the mixing of languages might be confusing or detrimental to the mastery of each.

1.1.1 Translanguaging in foreign language classrooms

To date the pedagogic applications of translanguaging have been discussed mostly with reference to contexts in which learning takes place *through* two

or more languages rather than those involving the learning of a language *per se*. In contrast, in foreign language classrooms worldwide, beliefs as to the need to eliminate or minimise students' exposure to and use of their dominant language (L1) remain deeply entrenched (see e. g. Cook 2001), partly in a bid to maximise access to the target language (L2), which is often very limited in such settings. Cummins (2007: 226–227) nevertheless points out that 'extensive communicative interaction in the [L2] ... and the utility of students' L1 as a cognitive tool in learning the [L2]' are not incompatible in the foreign language classroom.

How far espoused beliefs translate into actual practice, as measured by proportion of L2, varies enormously, ranging from 10–100 % in the surveys undertaken by Duff and Polio (1990) and Turnbull (2001). Such variation may be explained by the teachers' knowledge of the L1 or L2, or the receptive and productive capabilities of their students. Higher levels of L1 use on the part of the teacher or their students may nevertheless simply occur 'unbidden' (Canagarajah 2012: 8), as an intuitive means of facilitating and activating cross-lingual learning in such environments.

1.1.2 Translanguaging in synchronous online foreign language teaching

Synchronous online communication tools, such as Skype, represent a convenient, low cost, increasingly common means of connecting two or more people across locations for social, professional or educational purposes. Yet, whether audio only or video enhanced, the distributed nature of the participants, turn-taking protocols, limited paralinguistic cues, the need for stimuli to prompt participant interaction, and the challenges of technology together mean synchronous online group teaching is generally more challenging than it might be in face-to-face settings (see e. g. Hampel and Hauck 2004; Hampel and Stickler 2005, 2008).

Much research has focused on the multimodal affordances available in virtual pedagogic environments in general (e. g. emoticons, symbols, graphics, textchat comments etc.) and those pertaining to foreign language teaching and learning in particular (for the latter, see e. g. Hampel 2006; Lamy 2004, 2012). Hitherto, however, translanguaging has been largely unexplored within online instructional spaces.

Of interest is how the demands of the online medium (such as the need for more explicit instructions) affect foreign language teachers' communicative practices in such environments. In a study of synchronous online interaction in a higher education context, albeit not specifically from a translanguaging

perspective, Duensing et al. (2007) compare the nature of teacher language use – including the proportions of L1 and L2 employed – in respect of the same role play activity in three German foreign language classrooms: one face-to-face and two online. Classification of the respective teachers' language use as *classroom management* (ICT related and general), *instruction*, *modelling*, and *general talk* revealed higher levels of the first of these categories in both virtual settings – interpreted as reflecting the need for tighter group control in this medium – but no other differences between the contexts. Measures of L1 and L2 teacher talk showed that L2 German was used 63 % of the time in the face-to-face context and 54 % to 59 % in the online contexts. In addition, intra-sentential code-switching corresponded to 4 % of teacher talk in the face-to-face setting and 12 % to 13 % in the two virtual settings.

The above results for the face-to-face setting are in line with those of a larger study by Suby and Asención-Delane (2009), which quantified the beliefs and use of the L1 and L2 by five teachers in 14 Spanish beginner-level group tutorials at a North American university. Having found that the L2 (Spanish) was used between 68 % to 99 % of the time (77 % average) and code-switching 3 % to 5 % (4 % average), they concluded that the single most significant influencing factor in such variation in teachers' communicative practices was their belief in the pedagogic appropriateness of using the L1 in the classroom.

2 Research goals

This study represents an initial exploration of pedagogic translanguaging practices within a synchronous online foreign language classroom. It does so in relation to the online group tutorials associated with an adult beginners' Spanish course at a distance university in the United Kingdom. More specifically, it

- i. examines the approach to language use recommended in the briefing notes and tutorial plans prepared by the course designers for teachers' use in the online sessions; and
- ii. attempts to identify manifestations of pedagogic translanguaging practices in four samples of the online data.

3 Method

The study began with an examination of the briefing notes and plans supplied for use in the online tutorials – (i) above. The data analysed for (ii) above is

part of a more extensive longitudinal corpus of online classroom interaction which was collected by the first author between 2004 and 2005 over the duration of an entire adult beginners' Spanish course (Adinolfi 2011). The analysis employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to identify manifestations of classroom translanguaging at two points in the series of online group sessions – one at the beginning and one towards the end of the course.

3.1 Context

Lasting 11 months, the course, one of several available in the language studies programme of the distance learning university involved, requires approximately 300 hours of study, its exit level corresponding to A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The course is composed of two elements: a set of audio and text-based self-study materials, and a series of complementary synchronous online group tutorials to provide students with opportunities for spoken interaction.

The tutorials are accessed via *Lyceum*, an in-house real time audiographic communication tool featuring a virtual plenary space and smaller breakout rooms, a shared screen on which to view and use a whiteboard, concept maps for text-based activities, a textchat facility for posting short written notes, voting buttons to facilitate responses to classroom ballots, and various symbols and emoticons, such as a 'hand-up' to indicate a request to speak. Not having a video component, the teacher and student participants cannot see one another. However, they can be easily identified when they speak as their names are simultaneously highlighted in an on-screen panel.

Prepared by the course designers, a set of electronic tutorial plans and materials is supplied to the teachers in advance, to adapt for use in the online sessions as desired. A detailed examination of the tutorial plans revealed that all sessions follow a similar format, each incorporating a limited range of teacher-directed activity types, accompanied by detailed instructions, in order to prompt primarily spoken language among the students. Condensed student versions, known as *preparatory documents*, which list the L2 expressions associated with each activity, together with their L1 translations, are also provided for their reference before and during each session.

According to the introductory teacher briefing notes, the tutorials should be 'communicative and participative, with a variety of groupings and interaction formats, the content being in line with the language and cultural areas recently encountered in the course materials, together with students' needs'. With regard to language use, the instructions are as follows:

Students should speak Spanish during the exercises and so should you [the teacher]. However, the instructions for the exercises must be given in English to ensure they are understood. As the course progresses, and depending on the students and your own judgement, you [the teacher] can introduce some Spanish for the instructions.

The briefing notes and tutorial plans provided necessarily reflect the course designers' views regarding translanguaging practices in this online foreign language setting, even though they may not be explicitly articulated. For further information on the tutorial-related elements of the course, see Rosell-Aguilar (2005).

3.2 Participants

The corpus on which the current study is based captures the online classroom interaction of two teachers and their respective student groups. No specific criteria were employed in selecting the participants involved. An invitation was sent to all the teachers of beginner-level Spanish and two of them volunteered. In compliance with the institutional ethical requirements, the teachers and students received information about the research and were able to answer questions about it before signing a consent form. In order to minimise any impact on their practice, the study was explained in broad terms as an examination of aspects of online teaching and learning at this level. All names are pseudonyms.

Of the two volunteer teachers, Eva was female, South American, and had many years of language teaching experience. She also had an MA in Applied Linguistics. Javier was male, Spanish and newer to the profession.

It being the first iteration of the course, both teachers attended an initial briefing and were given training in using the online software. They were autonomous, however, in adapting the tutorial materials supplied to their sessions, which were scheduled roughly once per month.

3.3 Data collection and treatment

A feature of the audiographic communication tool employed in the online tutorials is a digital recording facility, which, activated at the press of a button, captures the spoken interaction occurring within a given virtual space. The fact that the teachers agreed to undertake the recordings themselves precluded any possible researcher intervention during the tutorials.

Having received the audio files from each teacher, the first author then embarked on the process of manually transcribing the virtual classroom data.

The transcriptions are based as far as possible on conventional English and Spanish orthography and punctuation. However, the incomplete and occasionally ambiguous utterances typical of unscripted speech, particularly when it combines two languages, including students' non-targetlike versions thereof, does not always neatly accommodate these written conventions. Square brackets were therefore used to indicate sounds and other language features that diverged from the target: e. g. *Er ¿cóm[a] se escrib[a]?* (*Er ¿cómo se escribe?*, 'Um, how do you spell that?').

The complete corpus comprises 42 hours of audio recordings, equivalent to 170 000 words. It encompasses four parallel sets of data, namely, two student groups for each of two teachers, each of which is composed of the series of available tutorials, followed by the respective one-to-one oral end-of-course assessments. A small number of recordings are missing or incomplete, due to teacher oversight or occasional technical problems.

Being based on audio recordings only, the corpus has not captured the contents of the whiteboard, concept maps, textchat and other features of the audiographic space. For the most part, their contents are evident from the references to them within the recordings. The plans and materials on which the tutorials are based are nevertheless available to provide further information, if necessary.

3.4 Criteria for analysis

The intention was to compare two points in time within the online sessions. Thus, two tutorials per teacher, each pertaining to one of their groups of students, were analysed, specifically Session 1, near the start of the course, and Session 7, towards the end.

The examination of the data took the form of a bottom-up thematic analysis, whereby the first author analysed the tutorial transcriptions and identified the most common teacher-student and student-student interaction patterns, together with any associated movements between communicative modes and languages. Following an initial categorisation, these patterns were confirmed or refined after a second and a third reading. The second author then checked a sub set of the data. There was no disagreement with regard to the categories and the analysis.

The qualitative analysis of the macro-level patterns of communication within the classroom discourse revealed the frequent micro-level use of code-switching on the part of both teachers. A close quantitative examination of this practice was therefore undertaken as a second analytical phase. Some incidents

of code-switching occurred within the student talk but their limited occurrence meant that they did not merit a detailed analysis of this kind.

The practice of code-switching has been examined across a number of language elements, among them discourse units (e.g. Foster et al. 2000), complementisers (e.g. Myers-Scotton 2002: 54), and intonational phrases (e.g. Maschler 1998). Most studies relating to pedagogy nevertheless tend to use the sentence as the unit of analysis (e.g. Macaro 2009). For ease of comparison, this method was also used in this study. The criteria used to analyse code-switching were as follows:

- discourse level (inter-sentential) code-switching is analysed within each turn
- syntactic level (intra-sentential) code-switching is analysed within each sentence

The transcription was parsed into sentences and the sentences were labelled as either English, Spanish, or Intra-Sentential Code-Switch (ICS), the latter indicating one or more language changes within the utterance (c.f. Callahan 2004). As indicated above, natural dialogic speech is notoriously difficult to capture systematically in written form – more so perhaps when it involves two languages and includes non-targetlike elements. The transcriber's decisions as to where oral utterances are divided into sentence-length sequences are therefore somewhat subjective and liable to a certain degree of inconsistency.

4 Results

This section presents the results of the macro and micro-level analyses in the data sampled.

4.1 Macro-level analysis

The analysis of the classroom discourse reveals that Eva and Javier draw directly from the tutorial materials made available to them but differ slightly in the activities they select for their respective sessions. There is little evidence of any adaptation of or supplementation to the activities. Rather, both follow the associated instructions very closely.

Table 1 indicates the main interaction patterns identified in the data. In many activities they are combined. Each pattern is exemplified in the subsection that follows.

Table 1: Main interactional patterns in the tutorial data.

	Interactional pattern	Teacher-Student prompts and responses	Mode	Language
I	Giving instructions	T	Speaking	L1–L2
		SS	Listening	L1–L2
II	Reviewing language	T	Reading + Speaking	L1 + L2
		SS	<i>Reading</i> + Listening	L1 + L2
		SS	<i>Reading</i> + Speaking	L2
III	Eliciting language	TT	Speaking	L1 + L2
		SS	Listening	L1 + L2
			<i>Looking at on-screen graphic</i>	–
		SS	Speaking	L2
IV	Setting up dialogues	T	Reading + Speaking	L2
		SS	Reading + Listening	L2
		S in pairs	Speaking	L2
		S in pairs	Listening	L2
V	Prompting non-verbal responses	T	Speaking	L1–L2
			Listening	L1–L2
		SS	<i>Looking at on-screen graphic</i>	MM
		or S-S in pair	+ Using the multimodal affordances of the online space (e. g. voting in agreement or disagreement, marking a graphic with a pin, resequencing a dialogue, spelling out a word in the textchat, making written notes etc.)	

Key to Table 1: T refers to the teacher, SS to all the students, S to one student, L1–L2 to English and Spanish being used combination (code-switching), L1 + L2 to one language being used to elicit the equivalent in the other, MM to multimodal communicative practices. Italics refers to optional possibilities.

A description and examples of the each of the patterns displayed in Table 1 follows:

I. Giving instructions

This interactional pattern applies to the beginning of all the tutorial activities and is a routine feature of the accompanying guidelines. In the course briefing notes, giving instructions is the only aspect of teacher discourse for which the

use of the L1 is specified (see Section 3.1 above). This interaction pattern typically involves the teacher introducing the activity and giving instructions, usually in the L1, but sometimes using a combination of the L1 and L2 (code-switching). As the teacher speaks, the students listen in order to understand what is required of them.

Example: Eva-S1

Eva ...OK so now we're going to go to um another um activity and this one is a concept map. OK. So we're here. Now I press the gather button, *reunir* button. So this one is an activity in which Didier and Seiko meet in an international Spanish school in Salamanca. So now if we can all have a discussion to find out in which order they go and then um a volunteer can drag then the actual boxes under the appropriate column. So I'll leave it to you to decide who um what do you think goes under what OK? [...]. So you have to, can anybody suggest where the boxes go then?

II. Reviewing language

This interactional pattern, often referred to as 'language revision' in the tutorial plans, is a typical first phase of most of the activities. Students are provided with a list of L2 expressions with their L1 translations in their preparatory documents in advance of the tutorial, divided up for each activity, to refer to before and during the session. The same expressions may also be provided for reference on screen. In this interaction pattern, the teacher reads out the L2 expressions, often also giving their meaning in the L1. The students listen to the teacher while simultaneously silently reading the same list. Sometimes individual students are then invited to say the L2 expressions out loud, perhaps also reading them at the same time. The teacher may also undertake a repeat review of the same expressions at the end of the activity.

Example: Javier-S7

Javier OK very quickly we're going to have a look at the months of the year, *los meses del año. Muy rápido. Los meses del año en español. So enero, febrero, marzo, abril, mayo, junio, julio, agosto, septiembre, octubre, noviembre, diciembre.*, So um I'd like to um each of you I'd like you to say one month of the year in turn, so starting from January we'll start with um Marcia *por favor?*

Marcia *Enero.*

Javier *Gracias, um Simon?*

III. Eliciting language

This interactional pattern is a less common alternative to (II) above. Here, the teacher elicits selected L2 expressions from the students. Most examples involve the teacher asking students for the L2 equivalent of an L1 expression, but more open-ended requests are also possible, such as inviting students to suggest an L2 greeting. Occasionally an activity will feature a series of on-screen graphics (images relating to hobbies or daily activities, for example), for the teacher to use as prompts. In this type of interactional pattern, the students listen to the teacher or look at the images provided and reply in the L2. The required L2 expressions may be available to the students in readable form. The teacher may also use the textchat facility to write out one or two expressions once they have been elicited.

Example: Javier-S1

Javier Who knows how to say in Spanish how do you spell, how do you spell it? *¿Cómo se dice?* How do you spell it? Does anyone know? Yes, Mr Lee, James?

James *Er ¿cóm[a] se escrib[a]?*

Javier Yeah, *¿cómo se escribe?* Yeah, that's absolutely right. I will write it down. Yeah. *¿Cómo se escribe?* Yeah? *Perfecto. ¿Cómo se escribe?* So there you go, so there you go on the textchat. Oh by the way, I hope that all of you have opened the textchat facility. Have you opened it all? Please say yes or no...OK to open the textchat, yes to open the textchat facility, um, you have to there are three buttons on the top right hand corner of your screen [...]. So 'how do you spell it?' *es ¿cómo se escribe?*, yeah? So I'll write down write down again.

IV. Setting up dialogues

Student-student L2 dialogues (role plays) represent a key spoken activity in all the tutorials. Drawing on a list of expressions, these take a question-answer format, the former usually fixed, the latter often allowing a little flexibility or personalisation. Having introduced the activity and reviewed or elicited the associated L2 expressions (see I, II and III above), the teacher usually begins by modelling the L2 dialogue, taking on the role of both interlocutors him- or herself, while the students listen, possibly reading the associated script at the same time. The teacher then repeats the exchange, inviting a student to take on one of the two roles. The students then pair up to practise the same dialogue, perhaps inserting a limited range of options or personalised elements into the answers, before switching roles.

Example: Eva-S7

Eva *Um a ver un momento. Muy bien entonces éste es la cuadrícula. This is the um concept map, tenemos que arrastrar um el, los los cuadros, they're squares, cuadros so that's why it's called cuadrícula but in in English it's a concept map, so that's why you have to drag the boxes. Muy bien entonces um Robert tú eres um el recepcionista y yo soy la cliente. Muy bien entonces um can you find the next the next phrase? ... Muy bien. Muy bien. Entonces vamos a practicar este diálogo. Er Robert, tú empiezas.*

Robert *¿Perdóneme?*

Eva *Oh shall we practise the dialogue? Vamos a practicar y tú empiezas and you start.*

Robert *Sí, er, de acuerdo. Hotel Portales. ¿Dígame?*

Eva *Quería hacer una reserva. ¿Tiene una habitación doble?*

Robert *¿Para qué fecha?*

Eva *Para el diez de junio.*

Robert *¿Para cuántas noches?*

Eva *Para tres noches.*

V. Prompting non-verbal responses

This interactional pattern draws heavily on the graphic functionality of the online pedagogic medium. In such exchanges, the teacher normally speaks while the students listen, perhaps looking at an image at the same time. The students may employ a variety of non-spoken responses, among these agreement or disagreement by using the voting buttons, or understanding by placing a marker on a map. Other possibilities, this time involving student-student exchanges, include using the textchat to write out their partner's surname as they spell it, as a form of comprehension check, or taking notes of what their partner says, to report this back orally to the whole group.

Example: Javier-S7

Javier *So as I said, I'm going to make statements about the the weather here so I'd like you to tell me to vote *sí* or *no* to say whether the statement is true or not. Por ejemplo el tiempo en Sevilla, el tiempo en Sevilla en el suroeste de España, south west, el tiempo en Sevilla, en Sevilla hace sol y hace veinte grados en Sevilla. ¿Sí o no? En Sevilla hace sol y hace veinte grados. ¿Sí? Sí, es cierto. En Sevilla hace sol y hace veinte grados. Muy bien. Por ejemp- por ejemplo en Madrid en Madrid en el centro de España, en Madrid hace sol. ¿Sí o no? En Madrid hace sol. No. Es falso.*

4.2 Micro-level analysis

Table 2 shows the total and the percentage of sentences uttered in Spanish, English, and those involving intra-sentential switches (ICS) by each teacher in the two tutorials under study.

Table 2: Language used by the teachers in Sessions 1 and 7.

Session 1	Spanish	English	ICS	Total
Eva	47 (18 %)	179 (69 %)	35 (13 %)	N = 261
Javier	158 (34 %)	227 (48 %)	85 (18 %)	N = 470
Session 7				
Eva	185 (49 %)	116 (30 %)	80 (21 %)	N = 381
Javier	331 (65 %)	102 (20 %)	73 (15 %)	N = 506
Total	721 (44 %)	624 (44 %)	273 (17 %)	N = 1618

A total of 1618 sentences were produced by both teachers across the four sessions analysed, of which 44 % were entirely in Spanish, 44 % in English, and 17 % involved some degree of intra-sentential code-switching between the L1 and the L2. For both teachers, the balance of language use shifts between Sessions 1 and 7. However, their use of intra-sentential code-switching remains stable, ranging between 13 % and 21 % (an average of 17 %) over this period. As might be expected, the proportion of the Spanish used by the teachers increases from the early session to the later one. In Session 1, 28 % of the teachers' sentences are in Spanish, with 56 % being in English and 16 % involving internal code-switching. The balance is reversed in Session 7, with 58 % being in Spanish, 25 % English and 17 % involving internal code-switching. Overall, Eva uses more English (46 %) than Spanish (36 %), whereas Javier uses more Spanish (50 %) than English (34 %). The percentage of sentences involving internal code-switching is nevertheless comparable (Eva = 18 %, Javier = 16 %).

The diagrams in Figures 1 and 2 below indicate the percentage of each language spoken by each teacher in the two tutorials analysed.

Figures 1 and 2 show the percentage of use of each language and of inter-sentential code-switching (ICS) per teacher and per session. The horizontal axis shows the tutorials and the vertical axis the percentage of use.

A similarity may be observed between the teachers in the increase in their use of Spanish over the course of the two tutorials, namely 31 percentage points between their maximum use of Spanish in the data sampled, at 50 % and 65 % of the time respectably. The trajectory of the change in each case is nevertheless

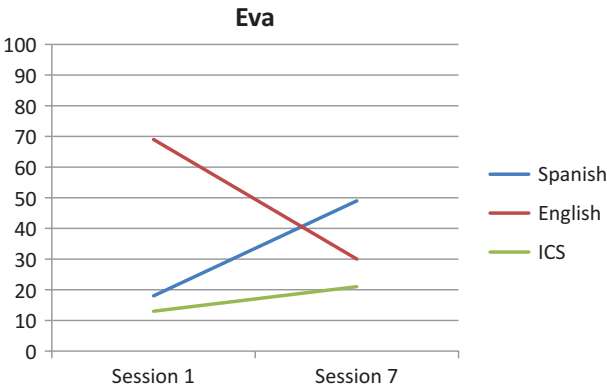


Figure 1: Percentage of each language spoken by Eva in Sessions 1 and 7.

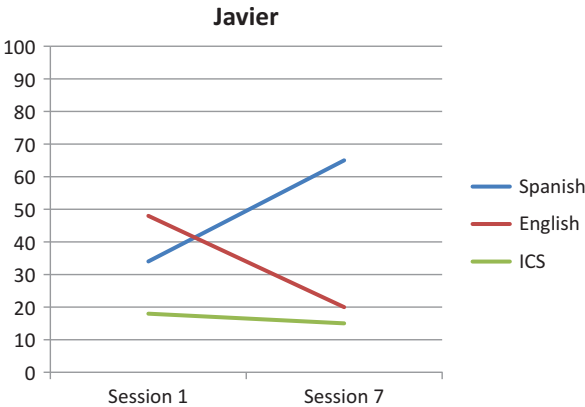


Figure 2: Percentage of each language spoken by Javier in Sessions 1 and 7.

very different for each teacher, with Eva’s rising from 18 % to 49 %, and Javier’s from 34 % to 65 %.

An examination of the students’ language choices in the same tutorial data reveals that their outputs are largely restricted to using the fixed and flexible Spanish L2 expressions associated with each activity. Their occasional use of English tends to be associated with technical problems on the one hand, or to language-related issues on the other, the latter generally being in response to the teacher asking (usually in English) if the students have any questions relating to the preceding activity.

Example: Eva-S1

Larry I can't find the textchat button, unfortunately.

Example: Eva-S7

Robert Um, yes [...] I think I have a difficulty in differentiating between differentiating between *ser* and *estar*.

The few instances of intra-sentential code-switching in the student data tend to begin with an apology in English, followed by a response in Spanish.

Example: Javier-S7

Sophie I'm sorry, yes, *sí*.

No difference is evident between the groups or sessions in respect of such communicative practices in the student data.

5 Discussion

This study set out to explore recommendations and practices in respect of pedagogic translanguaging in a synchronous online beginner-level Spanish tutorial context. It began with a detailed examination of the briefing notes and tutorial plans provided in terms of their approach to teacher and student language use within this environment. The tutorial plans were found to follow a similar format for all the sessions, consisting as they did of various types of teacher-directed activities, in order to prompt primarily speech-focused student exchanges.

In common with other foreign language instructional materials, the practice of translanguaging was not explicitly mentioned in the accompanying teacher briefing notes. The only reference to language use was that teachers should use Spanish throughout except in the case of the instructions to the activities, when English should initially be employed, moving to Spanish in line with the students' increasing comprehension of the L2. The suggestion that '[a]s the course progresses, and depending on the students and your own judgement, you [the teacher] can introduce some Spanish for the instructions' (see 3.1 above) nevertheless implies the alternation of languages, if only for this specific teacher-led classroom function.

A qualitative, macro-level analysis of the data examined the activity-related classroom discourse for patterns of translanguaging in respect of the modes and languages used in such exchanges. This revealed that these patterns corresponded to a set of predictable sequences in terms of teacher prompts and student responses. While the teachers were selective as to the activities they used in the

online sessions, they adhered very closely to the accompanying instructions. With the exception of the interaction patterns classified under (V) above, which made use of the graphic and multimodal functionality of the online space, few offered students opportunities for pedagogic translanguaging. Where this occurred, it involved movements between communicative modes (e.g. listening followed by writing in the textchat), but not between both modes and languages.

Of interest, however, were the high levels of code-switching that the teachers employed in mediating these activities, particularly in the form of L2-L1 paraphrasing. The study showed that both teachers gradually increased their overall use of Spanish over time as instructed, but that the proportion of intra-sentential code-switching remained constant. The teachers' use of both languages in this context appears to reflect an autonomous, intuitive, possibly unconscious strategy to engage their students and support their learning, perhaps in view of their beginner-level status. Complementary interviews to discuss this practice with the teachers involved would have been valuable. A closer study of the tutorial data to examine the extent that the teachers used different languages for different classroom purposes could also have been of interest.

With few exceptions, and for both sessions, the student outputs corresponded to the fixed and flexible Spanish expressions supplied for each activity. While this is in line with the recommendation that 'students should speak Spanish during the exercises' (see 3.1), there is no evidence of the teachers making this requirement explicit to their students. Rather, it may reflect the students' understanding of foreign language classroom communicative norms and the controlled nature of the tasks. The students' occasional use of English was mainly in connection with technical issues or language-related queries. Their few instances of sentence-internal code-switching mainly involved inserted apologies in English.

In general, evidence of students moving between modes of communication on the one hand and the L1 and L2 was limited in the tutorial data sampled. This may be explained in part by the separation of the self-study (text and audio) and interactive (tutorial) elements of this distance learning course, with the latter focusing specifically on prompting spoken student interaction. The potential for the incorporation of a range of multimodal pedagogic translanguaging opportunities was nevertheless not fully exploited in the design of the online activities, nor by the participants themselves.

6 Conclusion

Recent years have seen a number of educational initiatives begin to benefit from the practice of pedagogic translanguaging. To date, these have been largely

restricted to contexts in which language is the medium through which students learn, rather than the object of study. The extent to which translanguageing occurs in foreign language classrooms remains constrained in part by long-held beliefs regarding language use in such settings, as espoused in the majority of instructional materials currently available. There is nevertheless much to be gained by exploring the attitudinal changes required on the part of teachers and students, as well as the issues and outcomes associated with integrating pedagogic translanguageing opportunities into foreign language instructional contexts. While doing so may be more straightforward in face-to-face settings, particularly as these often involve a combination of traditional communicative modes (speaking, listening, reading, writing), the multimodal affordances and technical challenges of synchronous online teaching and learning spaces represent especially rewarding environments in which to experiment with and research the scope of such possibilities.

We conclude by recommending that increased opportunities for learner translanguageing are incorporated into both traditional and online foreign language classrooms at all levels of proficiency, with a range of activities prompting movements between communicative modes on the one hand and the features of different languages on the other, and look forward to reading accounts of such developments.

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Bionotes

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